14 (amended). A composition for preventing parturient hypocalcemia in an animal, comprising, in a suitable form for oral administration, at least one compound which reduces the absorption of calcium for the drinking water and/or from the ration of said animal, wherein the compound is in encapsulated form.

17 (amended). The composition according to claim 16, wherein the calcium-binding compound is selected from the group consisting of oxalic acid, sodium oxalate, phytic acid, a phytate, a clay mineral, ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid (EDTA) and its sodium salts Na_2EDTA and Na_4EDTA, trisodium nitrilotriacetate monohydrate, trisodium nitriloacetate, pentasodium diethylenetriaminepentaacetate, trisodium N-hydroxyethyl-ethylenediaminetriacetate, citric acid, a citrate, a polyphosphate, a tripolyphosphate, an orthophosphate and a cellulose phosphate.

18 (amended). The composition according to claim 17, wherein the calcium-binding compound is selected from the group consisting of a clay mineral, ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid (EDTA) and its sodium salts Na_2EDTA and Na_4EDTA, a polyphosphate, a tripolyphosphate, an orthophosphate and a cellulose phosphate.

19 (amended). The composition according to claim 18, wherein the calcium-binding compound is a clay mineral, and the clay mineral is a zeolite.

23 (amended). The composition according to claim 14 or 22 where the compound is encapsulated by a compound selected from the group consisting of a fat, a soap, a stearate, a protein, a polysaccharide, a cellulose, a gum, a glycol, gelatine and a derivative of any such compound.

Please add the following new claims:

30 (new). The composition according to claim 1, comprising two different compounds which reduce the absorption of calcium from the drinking water and/or from the ration of said animal.

31 (new). The composition according to claim 15, wherein one compound is a zeolite and the other compound is selected from

the group consisting of oxalic acid, sodium oxalate, phytic acid, a phytate, a clay mineral, ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid (EDTA) and its sodium salts Na_2EDTA and Na_4EDTA, trisodium nitrilotriacetate monohydrate, trisodium nitriloacetate, pentasodium diethylenetriaminepentaacetate, trisodium N-hydroxyethyl-ethylenediaminetriacetate, citric acid, a citrate, a polyphosphate, a tripolyphosphate, an orthophosphate and a cellulose phosphate.

32 (new). The compound according to claim 16, wherein the calcium binding compound is (1) selected from the group consisting of oxalic acid, sodium oxalate, phytic acid, a phytate, a clay mineral, ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid (EDTA) and its sodium salts Na_2EDTA and Na_4EDTA, trisodium nitrilotriacetate monohydrate, trisodium nitriloacetate, pentasodium diethylenetriaminepentaacetate, trisodium N-hydroxyethyl-ethylenediaminetriacetate, citric acid, a citrate, a polyphosphate, a tripolyphosphate, an orthophosphate and a cellulose phosphate or (2) is a calcium-free, calcium binding compound derived by one or more chemical reaction steps from a compound of (1) above.

33 (new). The compound according to claim 16, wherein the calcium binding compound is (1) selected from the group consisting of oxalic acid, sodium oxalate, phytic acid, a phytate, a clay mineral, ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid (EDTA) and its sodium salts Na_2EDTA and Na_4EDTA, trisodium nitrilotriacetate monohydrate, trisodium nitriloacetate, pentasodium diethylenetriaminepentaacetate, trisodium N-hydroxyethyl-ethylenediaminetriacetate, citric acid, a citrate, a polyphosphate, a tripolyphosphate, an orthophosphate and a cellulose phosphate or (2) is a calcium-free, calcium binding compound derivable from a compound of (1) above by not more than two chemical reaction steps.

34 (new). The compound according to claim 16, wherein the calcium binding compound is (1) selected from the group consisting of oxalic acid, sodium oxalate, phytic acid, a